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C O N F I D E N T I A L MANILA 001257

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DEPT FOR EAP/PMBS  
DOD FOR ISA/BG ALLEN

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [MARR](#) [MOPS](#) [CH](#) [RP](#)

SUBJECT: ROMULO'S CHINA TRIP FIXES DATES FOR PRESIDENT HU  
JINTAO'S STATE VISIT

REF: A. MANILA 1221

[B](#). 04 MANILA 5654

Classified By: (U) Political Officer Paul O'Friel  
for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

[1](#). (C) According to Department of Foreign Affairs China Director Maria Theresa Almojuela, the main purpose of Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo,s February 28-March 2 visit to

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China was to fix the timing for President Hu Jintao,s state visit to the Philippines, which is now set for April 26-28. Almojuela indicated the Chinese President is unlikely to venture outside Manila, but said the program is still fluid. Separately, Chinese Deputy Political Counselor James Lim confirmed the details of Jintao,s visit are not yet fixed, but said it would likely include an address to a joint session of Congress, as well as meetings with President Arroyo and Vice President De Castro.

[2](#). (C) Almojuela was quick to dismiss as inaccurate much of the Philippine press reporting surrounding Romulo,s trip. "70-percent of it is untrue; they got the names and places right, but that,s it," she commented. Almojuela asserted Romulo,s statements on the South China Sea had been totally distorted. He did not, she said, say the dispute had been "settled." Rather, Romulo had re-stated the traditional Philippine position emphasizing dialogue and diplomacy over conflict, and calling for full implementation of the Declaration of Conduct of Parties. (Note: In this context, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Philippine national petroleum companies signed an agreement on March 14 to include Vietnam in a previous bilateral Philippine-Chinese seismic study of portions the South China Sea (ref A). End Note.)

[3](#). (C) The military agreement Romulo ratified during his visit was "nothing new," Almojuela claimed, saying it represented only the memorandum of understanding on defense cooperation signed by Defense Secretary Cruz during his November 2004 China trip (ref B). In addition to calling for annual staff talks and an exchange of experts, the MOU included a Chinese offer to provide the GRP \$1.2 million in non-lethal military assistance, primarily engineering equipment.

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